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Behavioral Indicators of Drug Carrying in Open Spaces

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14. ABSTRACT Law enforcement personnel rely on a variety of behavior to identify persons carrying illegal drugs in open spaces. The purpose of this report is to identify and describe these behavioral indicators based on input from a variety of criminal justice practitioners. The behaviors include those displayed by individuals carrying drugs in their natural environment, during drug transactions, and when approached by law enforcement. We identified ten general categories of behaviors associated with the carrying of illegal narcotics. These categories include: general behaviors, situational awareness behaviors, physiological response to stress, dissipatory actions, dissociation, preparatory actions, streetcraft, dealer and buyer interaction, mouth carrying behaviors, and cheek and anal cavity carrying. These, and similar behaviors, are used throughout the United States to facilitate the identification of people carrying illegal drugs. Further research assessing the reliability and validity of the behaviors identified in this report are necessary.					
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PREFACE

Today's military commander recognizes the value of personnel in theater with experience in law enforcement gained from constant interaction with individuals who deceive, defraud, intimidate, and coerce. These personnel build an expertise in discerning the methods used to hide contraband in plain sight and witness the changing tactics, techniques, and procedures used by criminals. This is a lifesaving skill set and once documented, standardized, and validated, can be transitioned to others. Although not a common term in the accepted warfighting lexicon, the idea of discerning "What Just Doesn't Look Right" (JDLR) is an essential survival skill. Operationalizing JDLR, especially within and across cultures, can augment the curriculum being taught to military and law enforcement personnel by documenting and then transferring the essential knowledge employed by those pursuing criminals or insurgents.

A multi-phase project ongoing since 2010, the purpose of the JDLR Project is to identify and articulate indicators of behavior associated with deceit, threat, fear of detection, or the carrying of some form of contraband. Under JDLR, we are documenting these indicators of suspicious behavior based on the extent that a specific person of interest (like someone carrying a firearm) is aware of and interacting with a perceived threat (such as the presence of law enforcement).

The JDLR project has enabled us to identify specific behaviors law enforcement personnel look for, how these behaviors are used in their decision making process, and when these behaviors are perceived to be relevant. This research was derived from the knowledge and experience of police officers employed throughout the United States.

The project team includes law enforcement personnel with extensive experience with the subject matter at both the policy and operational level. Our team identified a number of behavioral indicators on which police officers routinely rely to interpret behavior and established standardized terminology for these behaviors. We also documented how and why police officers make decisions during an interdiction and the types of observations, assessments, and predictions they routinely make. This project facilitates both the transfer of knowledge to inexperienced personnel and serves as an impetus for expanding research to assess the reliability and validity of behavioral indicators of deceit, threat, fear of detection, and the carrying of contraband.

Each phase of the project is described independently below.

JDLR PHASE I

The primary goal of Phase I was the identification of behavioral indicators of deceit, threats, fear of detection, or the carrying of some form of contraband. Available research and documentation on these behavioral indicators is limited. It either focuses on simply articulating specific behaviors or describing various aspects of body language. In Phase I, we focused our efforts on documenting the behaviors indicating that a subject is carrying a handgun or illegal narcotics. We focused our operationalization of suspicious behavior on how an individual carrying these specific items of contraband behave when they are unobserved by a law enforcement (operating in their natural environment), how they behave when law

enforcement or a police patrol is present but not watching them, how they behave when that patrol is watching them, and how they behave when initially approached by that patrol.

The findings of Phase I was documented in three reports. These reports include:

- 1) Behavioral Indicators of Illegal and Legal Gun Carrying;
- 2) Behavioral Indicators of Drug Carrying in Open Spaces; and
- 3) Behavioral Indicators of Drug Couriers in Airports.

These reports provide a foundation for our understanding of specific behaviors associated with threat, deceit, fear of detection, and the carrying of contraband.

JDLR PHASE II

The primary goal of Phase II was to identify how behavioral indicators are used during the course of the interplay between a person of interest and the police. The project ventured to understand how police interpret, process, and react to human behavior. Unlike in Phase I, we did not focus solely on persons carrying firearms or drugs because there are jurisdiction-specific legal and use-of-force elements which dictate the dynamics of those encounters. Instead, we concentrated on encounters where the exact motivator of the suspicious behavior was unknown. Focusing on the unknown was necessary because a person may be acting suspiciously for a variety of reasons: they may be in possession of a firearm or illegal drugs, engaged in a criminal act, be wanted by police, have negative attitudes towards law enforcement, or simply be anxious. It is up to the police to make this determination.

To better understand how police use behavioral indicators we conducted a Field Training Officer Interdiction Seminar in October 2013. We invited teams of police officers from throughout the country. The officers participated in a role-playing scenario with experienced police trainers and were subsequently debriefed regarding what they saw and how they made decisions. We learned how the participating officers interpreted the behaviors being exhibited in order to determine their course of action. This effort included the development of a Universal Interdiction Framework (UIF) to both teach and assess the usage of behavioral indicators during an encounter

In Phase II, we also studied how law enforcement personnel develop a baseline of normal behavior in a given environment. The baseline is used to identify behavioral deviations. To understand baselining and ensure the applicability of project research to military personnel operating in a wide variety of environments we conducted a Cultural Translation Seminar in March, 2014. The combined research in both baselining and cultural translation of behaviors indicated the tremendous variation in norms of behavior from one location to another. Based on these findings, we determined there was a need to develop a system or process which operational personnel can utilize to determine the baseline in a variety of contexts and cultural settings.

The findings of Phase II were documented in two reports. These reports include:

1. Behavioral Indicators During a Police Interdiction; and
2. Developing a Culturally Neutral Context Specific Baselining Process.

These reports, in combination with the research conducted in JDLR Phase I, provide a basis for understanding when, why, and how behavioral indicators are used to identify threats, deceit, people carrying contraband, or individuals trying to avoid detection. This research, although preliminary, is tied to police officers decisions to detain, search, use force, or make an arrest. The JDLR Project created a foundation to develop training for law enforcement and security personnel to utilize behavioral indicators in a safe, legal, and effective manner. Training police and security personnel to interpret and properly react to the behavior of those with whom they are interacting will better prepare them to complete their mission and keep themselves and their compatriots safe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to identify and describe behavioral indicators of illegal drug carrying in a public space with the future goal of validating the indicators and evaluating their utility for law enforcement. The behaviors described in this report include those displayed by individuals in their natural environment, during drug transactions, and when approached by law enforcement officials. The report is divided into three sections: a general background of the study; behavioral indicators associated with drug carrying in public spaces and when they occur; and an explanation of some of the ethnic and cultural differences which drive certain behaviors of drug carrying individuals. This report seeks to describe specific behavioral indicators, the situations in which they are relevant, and an explanation of why these behaviors occur to facilitate the use of this knowledge to other settings.

Individuals play one of five key roles during a drug transaction: buyer, seller, cover, runner, and mule or transport. The motivations and behaviors of all five roles are explored and documented in this report. Ten general categories of behaviors associated with the carrying of illegal narcotics were also identified here. These categories include: general behaviors, situational awareness behaviors, physiological response to stress, dissipatory actions, dissociation, preparatory actions, streetcraft, dealer and buyer interaction, mouth carrying behaviors, and cheek and anal cavity carrying. All categories and their related behaviors are included in this report. The behaviors displayed by individuals during drug transactions may be affected by their cultural background and by whether they work independently or with a group. With the proper training and an understanding of a public space, it is possible for individuals to identify persons who may be carrying drugs based on these behaviors.

The ability to identify drug carrying individuals facilitates the interdiction and apprehension of offenders. A systematic assessment is recommended to determine the extent that persons carrying illegal drugs exhibit these types of behaviors, and to determine the extent to which it is possible for trained law enforcement to identify these behaviors. Based on this assessment, it may be possible to develop a more efficient and effective means of assisting the police to identify and safely interdict persons carrying illegal drugs.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF DRUG CARRYING IN OPEN SPACES

INTRODUCTION

Police throughout the country routinely stop, interrogate, and arrest individuals carrying illegal drugs. Police officers do not rely on coincidence, but use behavioral cues to identify persons carrying illegal contraband, such as drugs, or identify those involved in other criminal behavior. The capacity of police officers to identify these behavioral cues is developed through a combination of experience, training, and an understanding of the environment in which they work. The utilization of these behavioral cues allows an officer to enhance the level of service to the public and facilitates narcotics interdiction.

This report documents behaviors as diverse as how an individual behaves in his natural environment, to the initial contact between police and someone carrying illegal drugs. Also documented are behaviors related to drug transactions between individuals independent of any contact with law enforcement. This report describes specific behavioral indicators, the situations in which they are relevant, and an explanation of why these behaviors are occurring to facilitate the transfer of this knowledge to other settings.

This understanding of drug carrying behaviors has two primary constraints. First, the focus of this effort is not on behaviors associated with someone who is under the influence of drugs, rather, it is focused on the behaviors associated with the carrying of something that is illegal and subject to penalties if found by law enforcement. Second, the main emphasis of this effort is on behavior and not appearance of individuals. We are concerned with the actions taken and decisions made by an individual, not by the way an individual looks.

Understanding the context of drug dealing in open spaces is essential to law enforcement and security personnel. There are a number of factors that, in combination, lead to specific behaviors and reactions to certain situations. Being caught possessing or selling illegal narcotics can result in arrest and/or incarceration, which leads to a logical fear of apprehension by law enforcement. A drug transaction involves two or more people coming together to exchange money for an illegal substance. Therefore, both the dealer and the buyer are often concerned that the other will attempt to steal the drugs or the money. This theft can involve weapons and significant violence. Given this, the interaction involves two people who have something the other wants but they are concerned about how the drugs and money will be exchanged and must protect themselves and their product. At the same time, the dealer also has to ensure that he does not inadvertently turn off potential customers. These factors all combine to influence the behavior of those involved.

Utilizing behavioral indicators to identify a person who is carrying illegal drugs is not necessarily a straightforward process. It requires an understanding of not only the individual's behavior, but also of his environment. A specific behavior alone is not indicative of the carrying of illegal drugs; rather, these behaviors are cumulative. That is, they should be used in combination to understand an individual's behavior and provide context or opportunity to interact with that individual.

The indicators described in this document represent the consensus among a group of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and other documentation available through the Adversarial Modeling and Exploitation Office. To date, the indicators have not been subject to any systematic assessment. A scientific assessment is necessary to determine the extent that persons carrying drugs in open spaces exhibit these kinds of behavior and/or the ability of law enforcement personnel to spot them.

This document is divided into three sections. Section one provides a general background of the study. The second section describes behavioral indicators associated with drug carrying in public spaces. Section three describes some of the ethnic and cultural differences which can drive certain behaviors. Throughout the document we will refer to all individuals as a “he” for simplicity and consistency but the subject matter should be relevant to either gender.

BACKGROUND

Available documentation in the area of identifying behaviors associated with illegal drug carrying is limited. This creates reliance upon persons with subject matter expertise and law enforcement training. Also, understanding this subject matter requires an understanding of drugs and drug dealing which may be outside of some readers’ experience. Information on the sources for this document and drugs and drug dealers are included below.

Sources and Context

This document is based on a number of sources, specifically, the input of the authors, various subject matter experts, and as the primary source material, a workshop conducted on May 17, 2012 in Alexandria, VA. Other sources are cited where appropriate. The Subject Matter Experts who participated in this workshop, and that were consulted for this effort, are from various law enforcement agencies.

Drugs and Packaging

There are different types of illegal drugs and numerous ways they can be packaged. The more common drugs include marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, PCP, and pills. Each may be packaged in a specific way to keep the product in a useable form and to limit waste. For example, cocaine is water soluble therefore packaging needs to ensure the product is kept dry. There are also a number of general ways used to package drugs. These include bundling, plastic baggy corners, small plastic baggies, vials, or bulk sandwich bags. Various drug types and packaging are included in Appendix A.

There was a general consensus among the SMEs that the quantity of drugs carried was the most significant factor affecting behavior. This was followed in importance by the packaging, meaning that what is important to understanding behavior is what the drugs are placed in (vials, plastic baggies, etc.), rather than what type of drug it is. The only caveat to this issue of drug type is the kind of punishment associated with carrying it if caught. In many states, the sanctions for being caught in possession of marijuana are minimal in comparison to other drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine. Therefore, those carrying marijuana are likely to be less concerned with being caught and will exhibit fewer of specific types of behavioral cues.

Packaging matters somewhat more within the context of certain drugs like PCP, which are often carried in vials (because it is a liquid) and therefore the volume/size of the vials will vary. Behaviors will therefore be influenced by the type of packaging, the location it is carried on the person, and how much of the drug is carried.

Group Dynamics and Carrier Role

The purchase of drugs can occur under widely varied circumstances. It can vary from someone buying pills or marijuana off of a friend within one of their own homes, to the purchase of crack cocaine from a street dealer. Of concern in this report is drug dealing in open and public spaces. This dynamic creates a situation that puts people into certain roles and acts as a driver for certain behavior.

Within the context of the drug deal there are two primary players and a number of secondary players, depending on the situation. Behaviors associated with the carrying of illegal drugs vary based on the motivation an individual has for carrying those drugs. The primary motivations are personal use, dealing, and muleing or transport. This could involve an individual or a group. A group involved in drug dealing may also have an individual or individuals responsible for providing 'a cover' or security. While there are some differences in behavior based on an individual's motivation or role in a drug transaction (Table 1), there are also likely to be behaviors which are also common to any individual carrying illegal drugs for any reason.

Table 1 - Roles in a Drug Transaction

Player	Description
Buyer	This involves an individual who is purchasing or carrying drugs for personal use.
Cover	This involves an individual who provides security to a dealer. He is generally armed with a weapon or firearm.
Mule/Transport	The mule is someone who carries or transports drugs from place to place. He is not concerned with sales.
The Runner	The runner can serve a variety of functions to facilitate a drug transaction. He can act as a look out, resupply the dealer from a stash which is located in the vicinity, hold drugs or money, and identify potential drug purchasers

Table 1 also references the role of the runner. The runner is someone who is likely to be involved in the drug transaction in a variety of ways and could exhibit behaviors common to both the buyer and the seller.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF DRUG CARRYING

Nine general categories of behaviors associated with the carrying of illegal narcotics were identified. Each of these nine areas, with a list and definitions of related behaviors, are described independently in a series of Tables below. Also identified is the individual in the drug transaction that is likely to be exhibiting the behavior. This role identification does not include the runner because his exact role in the transaction can vary significantly.

While the goal of this document is to identify behaviors which are independent from use or withdrawal from various narcotics, the practical use of these behaviors necessitates the understanding that use and withdrawal can act as a driver of behavior. For example, there is consensus among project SMEs that drugs commonly known as “uppers” are likely to increase the frequency or intensity of certain behaviors and that those known as “downers” are likely to decrease the frequency or intensity of certain behaviors.

General Behaviors

There are behaviors that are common among people buying and selling drugs. They occur under a number of different circumstances and can be driven by different factors and will be discussed in more detail later in this document.

Table 2 - General Behaviors of Individuals Buying and Selling Drugs

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Blading	All	When a carrier angles his body and orients himself to put his own body in between the drugs he is carrying and law enforcement (or any threat).
2	Security Feel	All	A carrier may tap or touch the drugs on his person to confirm possession. If mouth carrying, this could involve repeated touching of his cheeks.

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
3	Hands in Pockets	Buyer, Dealer Cover	Buyers and dealers may place their hands in their pockets to manipulate, protect, count, and touch the product. This is more than a tap (i.e., a security feel) and involves a longer duration in contact with the drugs. A cover may put his hands in his pockets to maintain control of and access to the weapon. A buyer is likely to hold onto the drugs while walking away from the sale. This behavior tends to be more obvious than a security feel.
4	Adversarial Distance	Cover, Dealer	When the carrier maintains distance from a threat to allow for engagement or flight. A dealer will approach those he knows to make a sale. If he does not know a potential buyer, he may allow that person to come to him, perhaps as a means of giving him more time to assess the threat. A carrier is more likely to distance himself from a potential threat if he has drugs on him. When approached by law enforcement, this could involve a person shuffling backwards to put space between himself and the law enforcement officer (LEO).
5	Fluid Movement	Mule	A mule may follow the path of least resistance when moving in a given area or location. This behavior relates to both open spaces and controlled access points. In the case of controlled access points, this could include not getting behind people with kids at security checkpoints (with the idea being that this will limit scrutiny by security personnel), but rather behind business people that are moving efficiently. In open spaces, a mule may try and merge with the crowd and move with it, with the goal of not standing out.

Situational Awareness Behaviors

Situational awareness is the extent that an individual is aware of, evaluating, and reacting to his environment. An essential element of situational awareness is an understanding of the environmental baseline of the place where a potential offender or law enforcement officer is operating (Naval Research Laboratory, 2013). Behaviors related to situational awareness often stand out from the normal behavior in an environment (Table 3).

Table 3 - Situational Awareness Behaviors

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Scanning	All	A carrier may carefully watch his environment for threats (law enforcement or some other type of threat). This has also been called “hyper awareness”. It will be seen as if someone’s “head is on a swivel” and eyes looking around his environment. A dealer is likely to focus on vehicles and foot traffic. This behavior could also involve looking for escape routes. For mules, it could be scanning for a path of least resistance or to assess security for ease of access to or through a location.
2	Hunching Forward	All	A carrier who is scanning may hunch over and/or lean forward as part of the scanning process or when he is trying to identify a potential threat.

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
3	Threat Assessment	All	A carrier may deliberately watch an individual to determine the extent to which he is a threat. Includes a direct focus on an individual and this “look” appears to be more calculating than a casual glance. This may involve a squint when assessing the individual.
4	Head Tilt	All	While conducting the threat assessment, a person may tilt his head to the side.
5	Target Fixation	All	This involves an intense stare (often looking blank) that involves being aware of and concentrating on all surroundings, without movement of the head. It involves staring at the perceived threat, almost looking as if the individual is in a trance with wide blank eyes. In actuality he is fixated on the threat and processing the next actions that he should take, such as whether to flee or fight.

The way in which a person identifies and assesses a potential threat is a multi-step process. First, a person who is carrying drugs is initially likely to be scanning and looking for threats in his environment. Next, when he sees something of interest, like a potential threat, he is likely to lean forward to get a better look at the thing of interest. The next step in the process is the threat assessment, which could involve a tilt of the head as the threat is being assessed. If something is assessed as a threat, the individual is likely to become fixated on the threat while processing how to react. At any given point in this process if the individual determines something or someone is no longer a threat, he will go back to scanning and this process starts all over again.

Physiological Response to Stress

People may have a number of involuntary reactions due to a rapid increase in the level of adrenalin in their body when they are put in a fight or flight situation. This is commonly referred to in law enforcement circles as the “adrenalin dump” and we will utilize this term in this report. The body produces a natural drug called epinephrine that is used to protect and assist the body in a traumatic and violent encounter. It is generally brought on by fear or the precursor to violence. The extent a person exhibits these stress reactions can vary because of both the experiences of the person carrying the drugs and the way in which that person is approached by a potential threat. A more experienced or relaxed individual may show fewer cues and a confrontational approach by law enforcement may enhance the likelihood these cues are going to occur. The adrenalin dump can therefore result in a number of behaviors associated with the physiological responses to stress (Table 4). An individual may experience a mix of these cues in varying frequency and intensity. These physiological responses are generally uncontrollable.

Table 4 - Physiological Response to Stress

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Carotid Artery Pulse	All	A carrier who experiences a rapid increase in adrenalin may have a visibly pulsing or thumping carotid artery on his neck.
2	Enhanced Breathing	All	A carrier who experiences a rapid increase in adrenalin may be breathing rapidly.

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
3	Perspiration	All	A carrier who experiences a rapid increase in adrenalin may sweat excessively.
4	Wide Open Eyes	All	When initially contacted by law enforcement, a carrier may exhibit a startled “deer in the headlights” look.
5	Involuntary Facial Cues	All	A carrier who experiences a rapid increase in adrenalin may exhibit a nervous smile, pale face (because blood pools in his torso), or facial tics.
6	Adrenalin Shake	All	A carrier who experiences a rapid increase in adrenalin may shake. This shake can be felt as small tremors if in contact with an individual. It may be visible depending upon the distance from the individual and the part of the body being observed. A person’s hands may be seen to shake.
7	Sweating Palms	All	An individual who is experiencing stress is likely to sweat from his palms and he may wipe his hands off repeatedly on clothing or some other item to dry them.

Dissipatory Actions

Physical activity can help control and burn off the epinephrine associated with a spike in adrenalin levels. A person carrying drugs and experiencing an increase in adrenalin levels for any reason may engage in a variety of physical movements or actions to dissipate these substances (NRL, 2013). The extent a person exhibits these dissipatory actions can vary because of both the experiences of the person carrying the drugs and the way in which that person is approached by a potential threat. A more experienced or relaxed individual may show fewer cues and a confrontational approach by law enforcement may enhance the likelihood these cues are going to occur through an increase in the stress level of the individual approached. Unlike physiological response to stress, dissipatory actions are generally voluntary and involve repetitious movement of the whole or part of the body (Table 5).

Table 5 - Dissipatory Actions

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Hands touching Face or Hair	All	Repeated touching or rubbing of the face/head, touching hair, or rubbing eyes.
2	Scratching	All	Repeated itching or scratching on the body. This is more common in buyers and may be a result of stress or the use of stimulants.
3	Fidgety Hands	All	Repeated wringing, moving, or fidgeting of hands.
4	Fidgety Body	All	Repeated shifting or moving of body.
5	Yawning	All	Repeated yawning. This can be both an involuntary dissipatory action and a “fake yawn” which is done to give a person time to think about what he should do.

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
6	Rocking	All	Repeated swaying on feet either side to side or front to back.
7	Pacing	All	Person walking back and forth in a small area, done subconsciously to bleed off adrenalin.
8	Felony Stretch	All	Person will stretch arms while making assessment of situation, then may run (or fight).
9	Licking & Smacking Lips	All	Repeated licking or smacking of lips.

Dissociation

Dissociation involves the attempt to avoid attention by law enforcement or some other threat. It includes both the avoidance of and the reaction to a threat. When an individual believes he is being observed by law enforcement, he may try to become “invisible” in place and may feign other behaviors in order to go unnoticed (IALEFI, 2012) (Table 6).

Table 6 - Dissociation Behaviors

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	No Eye Contact	All	A carrier may avoid eye contact with law enforcement when approached.
2	Submissive Posture	All	When a carrier sees law enforcement (or some other threat) he may hunch over and down to avoid being seen as a threat.
3	Exaggerated Normalcy	All	This behavior occurs when a person exaggerates the extent to which he would appear to be a member of an environment (i.e., he is doing too much to blend in). For example, the CRIP street gangs wear the color blue to signify membership. A mule who is over exaggerating may dress all in blue (hat, shirt, shoes, belt, etc.) when he is carrying drugs into a CRIP neighborhood.
4	Blending	All	Blending involves someone trying to match or become part of his environment to avoid notice by law enforcement (or potentially some other threat). This can include a number of behaviors, such as checking phones, a male putting his arm around a female, or starting a conversation when he sees the police.

Preparatory Actions

When a person is put in a potential fight or flight situation, he may engage in a number of behaviors which serve to prepare him for further action (Table 7).

Table 7 - Preparatory Actions

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Fighting Stance	All	A carrier may get in a semi-defensive position with feet staggered and arms at the waist; this body position allows quick response to threat. A carrier may be more likely to go into a fighting stance when he perceives the threat as non-law enforcement.
2	Flight Prep	All	When a person is walking into a potential fight or flight situation, he might orient his body in a way to give him time to decide what to do. Flight prep occurs when a person's body is angled in one direction (towards a potential threat) while his feet are pointed in another direction (toward an avenue of escape) and is contemplating what to do next. He is also likely to look in the direction he is going to flee.

Street Craft

Selling drugs is risky because of both the money involved and the illegal nature of the product being bought and sold. Street craft is a set of behaviors specific to drug dealers which facilitate drug sales, increases their safety when interacting with potential buyers, and allows them to protect themselves and avoid detection by law enforcement (Table 8). The behaviors could be described as commonly accepted practices amongst drug dealers.

Table 8 - Street Craft Behaviors

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Short Phone Calls	Dealer	Multiple Short (20 seconds or so) phone calls to arrange a buy.
2	Frequent Hand to Hand Contacts	Dealer w/Buyer	Frequent hand-to-hand contacts to "cover" the exchange of money and narcotics.
3	Meaningless Rides	Dealer	Dealer getting numerous short rides (to conduct a drug sale in a car), which may seem meaningless to an observer.

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
4	Dressed for Success	Dealer	A dealer may wear a specific item or style of clothing intended to identify the wearer as a person in possession of narcotics for the purpose of sales. The specific item or style can be the dealers “brand”, worn frequently, or change frequently with the new identifier being distinct from that of others. This item does not necessarily have to be worn; rather it could be placed somewhere obvious and visible in the area where a dealer is operating. For example, the object could be placed in the rear dash of a vehicle parked in the immediate vicinity to where that person is selling.
5	Delicate Entering of Pockets	Buyer	A carrier may delicately reach into pockets to avoid pricking himself on a needle (in the case of a person who injects heroin) or to avoid breaking his pipe (in the case of a person who smokes rock or crack cocaine).
6	Loitering	Dealer	If dealer is selling in a specific area he may move about in a small area but not move out of it. Loitering is different from pacing (i.e., a dissipatory action) because it involves moving around a general area for purposes of sale (not to burn off adrenalin). Lookouts are often used in street level dealing and may loiter nearby.
7	Hiding the Sale	Dealer	If a dealer is selling in a public place in close or immediate proximity to a place of business, a dealer may move into a store to make a deal and then return to the street. This is done to remove the transaction from public view.
8	Practice Run	Dealer	Dealer may simulate pulling out drugs to make a sale (out of mouth or pocket) in order to reduce likelihood of being seen. This is not done in the presence of a buyer, but practiced to ensure that a sale goes smoothly.
9	Interrogation	Dealer	The dealer may question a buyer with whom he does not have familiarity with in order to determine whether or not the buyer is a threat (like an undercover law enforcement officer). During this time he may also be looking around to see if there are any other threats in the area and determine if it is safe to make a sale.

Dealer and Buyer Interaction

The risk from both law enforcement and other criminals associated with a drug transaction influence a number of behaviors which serve to protect the dealer or the buyer. These behaviors are explained in greater detail in Table 9.

Table 9 - Dealer/Buyer Interaction

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Happy Feet	Buyer, Mule	This behavior involves a change in stride of a carrier. It involves an individual walking with more exuberance after the purchase of drugs. He is walking differently because he is no longer worried about getting robbed and he has his drugs. This behavior may also occur in mules when they successfully avoid being detected at a checkpoint or the contraband they were carrying was not found during a search, but this is likely to be less pronounced or muted.
2	Reexamination	Buyer	After purchase and egress, a buyer may look at his product again to confirm what he has purchased.
3	Marketing Gauge	Dealer w/ Buyer	A dealer may stare at potential customers as they approach to determine if they are a possible “point of sale” (different from scanning). May involve a “nod” from either the buyer or the seller. The dealer will ignore those that are not potential buyers. The extent this occurs will be dependent on the level of recognition between the buyer and the seller. If a buyer is known, the dealer may not change his behavior at all.
4	Buyers Gait	Buyer	On approach to purchase drugs, a buyer may adjust his pace to allow for a threat assessment. This could include slowing down his pace or stopping all together. It may also be exhibited as the buyer walking in a diagonal line on approach. After purchase the buyer may walk away faster. This slowing or change in gait may also be done to present an air of confidence in the face of danger as he approaches. The quickness of exit is both a self-defense mechanism and because buyers are typically in a hurry to use the drugs.
5	Hands Out	Buyer	Buyer will approach with his hands presented to allow a dealer or his cover to see he is not carrying a weapon. Hands are typically held at waist level, not high in the air like an encounter with law enforcement. A buyer may hold money in his hands to show he is seeking to make a purchase and is not a threat.

Mouth Carrying Behaviors

A common method for persons to carry illegal drugs is in their mouth. Usually drugs carried in the mouth are carried in plastic to avoid contamination from saliva. Carrying quantities of drugs in their mouth, as dealers may do, will likely cause a number of observable behaviors (Table 10). These behaviors are generally associated with a dealer who carries drugs in his mouth, but some buyers also carry drugs in their mouth so they can either swallow the drugs or spit them out if necessary.

Table 10 - Mouth Carrying Behaviors

#	Behavior	Who?	Definition
1	Cheeking	Dealer	A carrier's cheek is likely to become tired when carrying drugs in his mouth. He may therefore move the drugs around the mouth with his tongue or fingers to shift them into a more comfortable position. This could include side-to-side movements to manipulate the drugs or repeated touching of the mouth with the fingers to move the drugs around.
2	Hook & Cover	Dealer	This behavior involves a dealer who covers his mouth with his hand and takes drugs out of the mouth. He typically spits the drugs into his hand or less frequently, he may use one finger to pull drugs out or to move them around inside his mouth.
3	Difficulty Talking	Dealer	A person mouth carrying may shorten his use of words, have quieter speech, or have difficulty speaking. Intensity and frequency depends on quantity of drugs.
4	Limited Talking	Dealer	A dealer may talk less or avoid talking so as not to have drugs fall out of his mouth. Intensity and frequency depends on quantity of drugs.
5	Covering Mouth	Dealer	A dealer may place his hand over his mouth so drugs do not fall out. Intensity and frequency depends on quantity of drugs.
6	Vomiting	Dealer	A dealer may swallow drugs when pulsed by law enforcement and vomit them back up. This could include vomiting intentionally or unintentionally.
7	Carries Water Bottle	Dealer	A dealer may carry a water bottle to hydrate or wet his mouth because it gets dried out when mouth carrying. The water can also be used to help swallow the drugs if he fears being caught with them. This behavior is relevant to mouth carrying behavior only.

Cheeking and Anal Cavity Carrying

People who transport drugs for sale or personal use may also store drugs in their anal cavity or their intergluteal cleft.¹ Often drugs stored for sale are held in the intergluteal cleft, not the anal cavity. Drugs stored in these areas of the body are usually packaged in a way that will keep secretions from contaminating the drugs. This behavior has also been called "kiestering" or "boofing". Unlike when drugs are carried in other places on the body, kiestering is represented by only one behavioral indicator. This behavior is called a "stiff walk" and is caused by the storing of drugs in both the anal cavity and the intergluteal cleft. Those who are carrying drugs in either location are likely to be walking slowly and stiffly using shorter strides.

¹ Intergluteal Cleft – the groove between the buttocks that runs from just below the sacrum to the perineum. It forms a visible border between the gluteus maximus muscles (the buttocks). The intergluteal cleft is also referred to as the natal cleft, vertical gluteal crease, the gluteal cleft.

CULTURAL DYNAMICS

The behaviors associated with drug dealing vary across cultural groups. This variation can occur due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, perceptions of personal space, masculine behavior and machismo, and deference to authority. It is beyond the scope of this document to identify all cultural groups of potential relevance and identify all variation in behaviors. Rather, we need to understand cultural variation does exist and incorporate this understanding into further research in this area.

CONCLUSION

Through consultation with Subject Matter Experts we have identified a variety of behaviors associated with the carrying of illegal drugs in public spaces. The behaviors range from those related to stress and adrenalin to those which facilitate a drug transaction and reduce the likelihood of being arrested by the police. With proper training and an understanding of that public space, it is possible for an individual to identify persons who may be carrying drugs. The ability to identify who may be carrying drugs facilitates the interdiction and apprehension of offenders.

The behaviors identified in this report also provide us an opportunity to better understand how an individual acts when he is attempting to avoid notice or to deceive those around him. This level of understanding provides us the potential to transfer these behaviors to other settings and assess their applicability to other types of criminal behavior.

To fully utilize these behaviors and determine their utility to both the law enforcement and other contexts requires a systematic assessment. An assessment is necessary to determine the extent that persons carrying illegal drugs exhibit these kinds of behaviors and the extent it is possible for trained law enforcement to identify them. Based on this assessment, we hope to develop more efficient and effective means of identifying and safely interdicting with persons carrying illegal drugs. This enhanced capacity will hopefully serve as a means of reducing crime while keeping officers and the public safe.

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Appendix A: Drugs and Packaging

There are numerous types of illegal drugs. The more common types include marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and pills. Each must be packaged in a specific way to keep the product in a useable form and limit waste. Examples of common drugs and packaging are described in Table 11 below.

Table 11 - Common Drugs and How They are Packaged

Type of Drug	How Packaged
Marijuana	Marijuana is often already dried and the retention of moisture is often desirable. It is generally packaged in plastic bags. Hashish and other marijuana derivatives may be carried in foil or plastic.
Cocaine	Cocaine in powder form is water soluble and will lose mass if exposed to moisture; therefore it is often packed in paper bindles, plastic bags, or aluminum foil. Paper bindles are not typically carried in a body cavity (mouth or anus) because they absorb moisture.
Heroin	Heroin is generally very potent, which means that the individual packages are often smaller. Heroin is also subject to evaporation and dissolution when exposed to moisture. To maintain the amount of product it is often carried in paper, which will limit how it is carried. Less processed versions of heroin such as Black Tar or Afghan Rock can be carried in plastic.
Methamphetamines	Methamphetamine is susceptible to moisture loss and will also have a reaction to metal, so it is often carried in paper or plastic products. The most common method is plastic. Quantity is likely to have a larger influence on behavior because the product needs to be sealed against moisture. This sealing allows methamphetamine to be cavity carried.
Crack Cocaine	Crack is a processed form of cocaine. It is often stored in plastic baggie corners. May also have a single large rock from which a dealer will break off a piece to make a sale).

Table 12 represents a general description of drugs and some constraints which influence their packaging. It is important to note that there are a wide variety of illegal drugs and there are a wide variety of other drugs that are derived from these drugs (like crack is cooked from cocaine). It is beyond the scope of this document to describe all the associated drugs, their derivatives and how each could be packaged.